

NIKI HINKLE
SIGHT
PH: 330. 475. 9861
E: niki@hinkcreations.com



RYAN HINKLE
SOUND
PH: 330. 703. 5610
E: ryan@hinkcreations.com

Pre-Flight Checklist

Before going into this list, remember the basic rule of thumb is to be prepared and be comfortable.

BEFORE THE SESSION

- ☐ You've rehearsed the songs and all parts as you will play them in the studio (overdubs, too.)
- ☐ You have more than enough songs ready to play.
- ☐ You've rehearsed with your drummer listening to the click.
- ☐ You've got your tempos documented and are prepared to play a little faster or slower
- ☐ Your singer's been singing every day.
- ☐ Any reference CD's you're used to hearing on your home system.
- ☐ Your rehearsal tapes
- ☐ If you prefer your own brand of headphones, bring some.
- ☐ Oh, yeah, and NO entourage. It slows you waaaay down.

GUITARISTS/BASSISTS:

FOR THE SESSION, HAVE READY:

- ☐ Water & snacks
- ☐ Be well-rested
- ☐ Spare CD-R's, tapes and/or hard drives, if the studio isn't providing them
- ☐ Directions, hours, phone number, and web address for a local music supply store
- ☐ Spare copies of music and lyrics for your engineer
- ☐ Some pencils, blank staff paper and a notepad to write on
- ☐ Your loops/sequences/base tracks on a format acceptable to the studio
- ☐ Your original MIDI sequences, in case they need to be flown in
- ☐ Additional copies of your Reference Material
- ☐ Bring your guitars and amp(s), of course
- ☐ Good, proven instrument cables and speaker cables (and spares!)
- ☐ Make sure your guitar is intonated properly
- ☐ Put new strings on your guitar.
- ☐ Fresh batteries and good power cables for all pedals
- ☐ Manuals for any esoteric functions you'd like from your equipment
- ☐ "A tuner. For the love of god, a tuner." - (Ben Olson of The Old Sins)
- ☐ Cord winders, wire cutters, and any other tuning/intonating tools
- ☐ Picks
- ☐ Extra batteries for any active basses

THE CHECKLIST

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DRUMMERS:

- ___ Obviously, bring drums, stands, cymbals.... and spare cymbals for a larger, musical palette.
- ___ Put some new heads on a couple of days prior, so they can settle in
- ___ Extra drum heads and a kevlar patch if you use one
- ___ A drum key!
- ___ Any special tools, like a screwdriver or alan wrench, for all of your hardware
- ___ Your own metronome, drum machine or sequence you like to use for a click track
- ___ Most engineers like a hole in the front of the bass drum (or no front head at all).
- ___ Extra sticks and different kinds of mallets & brushes, because you never know...
- ___ A spare kick drum beater (or a whole second pedal)

- ___ An extra snare drum for sound (or spare parts if something breaks)
- ___ Extra felts for your stands
- ___ Did I mention water?

KEYBOARDISTS:

- ___ Your synths and any amps/di's you swear by
- ___ Good & working instrument (and speaker) cables
- ___ Fresh batteries and good power cables for all of your gear & pedals
- ___ Bring your manual

VOCALISTS:

- ___ If you have a favorite recording mic to try, feel free to bring it.
- ___ Some room-temperature water
- ___ Your favorite tea, vitamin or herbal supplement

One last thing: Diplomacy is huge when it comes to saving time and sanity in the studio. Define your roles in the studio and determine which band members are responsible for "signing off" on which sounds. If there's ever a difference of opinion, feel free to experiment using your own dollars, but be prepared to defer to one member of your group to make the final decision, depending on the part.... or you could just move on to something else and come back to it at a later date with fresh ears, having taken some time to listen to your rough mixes.